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How to Be a Moral Taste Theorist

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Abstract

In this paper, I attempt to recover an 18th Century approach to moral theory that can be called Moral Taste Theory. Through an exploration of 18th Century sources I define the characteristics of moral taste theory and to distinguish it from its closest rival, moral sense theory. In general a moral taste theorist holds that moral judgments are analogous to aesthetic judgments while a moral sense theorist holds that moral judgments are analogous to physical sense perception. Francis Hutcheson was a paradigmatic moral sense theorist, but I argue that David Hume is best understood as a moral taste theorist. If we do not understand the concept of moral taste, we cannot understand 18th Century moral philosophy, and, more importantly, we will miss out on an important source of inspiration for 21st Century moral philosophy.

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INTRODUCTION

In the 20th Century, David Hume's moral theory was variously been interpreted as noncognitivism, quasi-realism, and even common sense realism. It is perhaps more faithful to Hume's own thought to categorize him as a *moral taste theorist*. Yet 21st Century moral theory has no such category. In this paper, I attempt to define the characteristics of moral taste theory and to distinguish it from its closest rival, moral sense theory. In the process, we will not only understand the 18th Century British Moralists a bit better, we will also see what the concept of taste has to add to any discussion of morality.

To understand what moral taste theory is about, we begin with Hume himself. Hume opens his most mature work of moral philosophy, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*,¹ by addressing himself to the 18th Century debate between rationalism and sentimentalism: "There has been a controversy started of late much better worth examination, concerning the general foundation of morals; whether they be derived from reason, or from sentiment" (EPM 1.3). This debate, Hume says, is about whether we can "attain the knowledge of" moral distinctions "by a chain of argument and induction" or whether we must experience "an immediate feeling and finer internal sense" (ibid). As Hume characterizes it, what is at issue here is whether moral distinctions are *logically necessary* and hence "the same to every rational intelligent being" or whether they are *logically contingent* because "founded entirely on the particular fabric and constitution of the human species" (ibid). In the 20th Century historians called the former group moral *rationalists* and the latter group moral *sentimentalists*.

Hume admits that he finds both sides “plausible” (EPM 1.9). Both sides capture an essential element of the phenomenology of moral judgment. Rationalists point out that moral judgments are, in 20th Century terms, *cognitive*: moral judgments make claims about “what exists in the nature of things” (EPM 1.5), claims that might be either true or false. Sentimentalists, on the other hand, point out that moral judgments are *affective* and *conative*: they are matters of feeling and desire. Rationalists argue that if morality were grounded only on “the standard of sentiment” then, like other sentiments such as judgments of beauty, morality would be noncognitive, merely a matter of “taste” and hence not susceptible to the kind of rational argument to which we standardly submit moral claims. “Truth is disputable; not taste”, claims the rationalist (ibid.). Sentimentalists reply that if morality were discovered by “the cool assent of the understanding” (EPM 1.7), then morality would be nonconative, incapable of moving us to action and unable “to regulate our lives and actions” (EPM 1.8) as we expect it to. Hume concludes that both sides seem correct: *moral judgments seem both cognitive and conative*. Moral judgments are motives to action while simultaneously being capable of rational dispute. Hume says: “I am apt to suspect, they may, the one as well as the other, be solid and satisfactory, and that reason and sentiment concur in almost all moral determinations and conclusions” (EPM 1.9).

Hume argues that since moral judgment “renders morality an active principle” (i.e., moral judgment moves us to action), then “it is probable” that “the final sentence” of moral deliberation is grounded in sentiment (ibid.). But that’s not the whole story.

It is probable, I say, that this final sentence depends on some internal sense or feeling,

which nature has made universal in the whole species. For what else can have an influence of this nature? But in order to pave the way for such a sentiment, and give a proper discernment of its object, it is often necessary, we find, that much reasoning should precede, that nice distinctions be made, just conclusions drawn, distant comparisons formed, complicated relations examined, and general facts fixed and ascertained. (ibid.)

Only passion and sentiment can move us to action, but we still need reason to help direct our sentiments toward the right objects. This point suggests to Hume an analogy with aesthetic judgment: He says that “some species of beauty” are indeed indisputable as the rationalists say.

Some species of beauty, especially the natural kinds, on their first appearance, command our affection and approbation; and where they fail of this effect, it is impossible for any reasoning to redress their influence, or adapt them better to our taste and sentiment. (ibid.)

If someone disagrees with you about whether a particular tree or sunset is beautiful, it is hard to know what to say to them that could change their judgment. But not all beauty is beyond dispute in this way: “But in many orders of beauty, particularly those of the finer arts, it is requisite to employ much reasoning, in order to feel the proper sentiment; and a false relish may frequently be corrected by argument and reflection” (ibid.). When it comes to art, there is a difference between good taste and bad taste, and rational discussion is capable of moving us from the latter to the former. And this is

the way moral judgment seems to work, too: “There are just grounds to conclude, that moral beauty partakes much of this latter species, and demands the assistance of our intellectual faculties, in order to give it a suitable influence on the human mind” (ibid.). Therefore the sentimentalists are right that action requires passion, but the rationalists are also right that moral judgment is disputable.

Here the aesthetic concept of *taste* has allowed Hume to bridge the gap between reason and sentiment by showing how both are necessary. The “perception of beauty and deformity” is clearly based on our embodied human “constitution” (EPM 1.3). But we are not slaves to the whims of sentiment. Our taste in art can be educated—“corrected by argument and reflection” until our taste is no longer “false” but has “a proper discernment of its object” (EPM 1.9). Hume concludes that morality works the same way such that moral goodness should be conceived as *moral beauty* and moral judgment should be conceived as *moral taste*.

As a predecessor of his view that moral judgment is analogous to aesthetic judgment, Hume points to “the elegant Lord Shaftesbury” who, Hume says “adhered to the principles of the ancients” in seeing “morals as deriving their existence from taste and sentiment” (EPM 1.4). Sometimes Shaftesbury and Hume, along with Francis Hutcheson, are said to be part of a philosophical tradition called “moral sense theory”.ⁱⁱ I argue that this grouping is misleading. The term “moral sense theory” as applied to a tradition of moral epistemology whose main members are supposed to be Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, and Hume seems to be due primarily to the influence of D.D. Raphael.ⁱⁱⁱ This is not to say that Raphael invented the term “moral sense”, but that he encouraged the use of that term to refer to a *particular epistemological theory—a unified tradition or*

philosophical school. This usage, I argue, obscures fundamental differences between Hutcheson on the one hand and Shaftesbury and Hume on the other. The latter two thinkers are better thought of as moral taste theorists; only Hutcheson was a moral sense theorist. In general a *moral taste theorist* holds that moral judgments are analogous to aesthetic judgments in that someone with good moral taste has the acquired ability to discern and appreciate morally relevant qualities through the skillful use of perceptual and rational faculties. A *moral sense theorist*, on the other hand, holds that moral judgments are analogous to physical sense perception in that certain information (viz., knowledge of the presence of moral properties) enters the mind immediately when attention is directed to the relevant objects.

Before Raphael, there was some precedent for talking about “the moral sense theory”,^{iv} but the more common term was L.A. Selby-Bigge’s “sentimentalist school”. Selby-Bigge does use the term “moral sense theory” in the introduction to his anthology *British Moralists*,^v but he limits its application to Hutcheson, using the term “sentimental theory of the moral faculty” (in contrast to “intellectual theory of the moral faculty”) for the broader tradition. This is closer to the way the terms were used in the 18th Century. Adam Smith is one of the clearest thinkers on this point during the period. Smith is careful to distinguish Hutcheson’s “moral sense” theory which posits “a peculiar power of perception” from the theory that virtue is “recommended to us ... by some other principle in human nature, such as a modification of sympathy, or the like” (TMS VII.i.4, p. 266). He calls the latter view “the theory of moral sentiments” and clearly has in mind as paradigm proponents of this view not only himself but also Hume, his contemporary and friend.^{vi} While Hume does use the term “moral sense” in the heading of *Treatise* 3.1.2 “Moral distinctions deriv’d from a moral

sense”, this is not his preferred term.^{vii} He only uses that term in one other place in the *Treatise* (T 3.3.1.25)—the very same section in which he says moral judgment “proceeds entirely from a moral taste, and from certain sentiments of pleasure and disgust” (T 3.3.1.15). By the time he wrote the second *Enquiry*, Hume is careful to avoid the misleading term “moral sense” altogether, using the more accurate term “moral sentiment” (as, for example, in the title to the first Appendix).

Both Stephen Darwall and Michael Gill have warned us against the misleading nature of Selbe-Bigge’s sentimental/rationalist distinction.^{viii} I suggest a similar wariness with regard to Raphael’s blanket use of the term “moral sense”. Writing after the advent of rational intuitionism, Raphael wanted to reassess the concept of an empirical faculty of moral sense with the agenda of demonstrating the superiority of a non-empirical faculty such as the one posited by intuitionists like G.E. Moore. In *The Moral Sense* he takes the issue in moral epistemology to be this: “When I judge that I ought to do a certain action, do I make this judgment on the basis of knowing, or of feeling, or of sensing something?” (p. 1). Later he makes clear that he recognizes only two alternatives in moral epistemology: “sense or feeling” on the one hand and “reason or knowledge” on the other (p. 2). If my arguments here are successful, then *taste* will emerge as a third alternative alongside *reason* and *sense*—a *via media*, in fact, to bridge the other two alternatives. In order to account for both the cognitive and conative aspects of moral judgment, there must be, as Hume puts it in the first Appendix to *An Enquiry Concerning the Principals of Morals*, “some internal *taste* or feeling, or whatever you may please to call it, which [both] *distinguishes* moral good and evil, and which *embraces* the one and rejects the other” (EPM Appx 1.20, my emphasis).

Since my distinction between moral taste theory and moral sense theory is not a standard distinction in the literature on the British Moralists, a few words of clarification are in order. In general, *moral sense theory* is the view that posits an innate faculty for detecting moral properties. There are three essential features of moral sense theory.^{ix} First, the moral sense is a special faculty of the mind, usually conceived of as distinct from reason.^x Second, the moral sense is instinctive. Just as all healthy human beings are born with senses of sight, hearing, etc., so human beings are born with a fully functioning moral sense. Far from being necessary, education generally hurts our ability to make correct moral judgments. For example, Hutcheson thinks that we would all naturally agree in our moral judgments except that some of us have received bad philosophical education thus corrupting our ability to understand what our moral sense is telling us.^{xi} Third, and most importantly, the moral sense is cognitive and/or affective, but not conative. Like our other senses, the moral sense delivers information and feelings into the mind. We may or may not then feel a desire to pursue or avoid the object of our perception. But whether or not we do feel such a desire, that desire is distinct from the perception itself.

Moral taste theory is the view that moral judgments are analogous to aesthetic judgments in that someone with good taste has the acquired skill of discerning and appreciating certain qualities. Hence to speak of moral *taste* is to imply the existence of moral *beauty*. Moral sense theory, on the other hand, may, but need not, involve such a commitment to moral beauty. Moral taste theory contrasts with moral sense theory in each of the three essential features mentioned above. First, judgments of moral taste make use of our ordinary perceptual and rational faculties; they do not require any special faculty of the mind. Second,

good moral taste is acquired, not instinctive. Good taste is the product of education. And third, the faculty of moral taste is simultaneously cognitive and conative, both detecting the presence of virtue and vice and motivating us to pursue or avoid them. The person with good moral taste is both good at knowing what to do and generally inclined toward doing the right thing—and *these facts are both grounded in the same source in the moral taste*. This last point will become clear as we explore the concept of taste in the next few pages.

When we speak of “taste” in art or ethics, we are, of course, using a metaphor drawn from our physical ability to detect flavors of food.^{xii} In its metaphorical use “taste” is primarily an aesthetic term referring to the faculty of discernment and appreciation of aesthetic properties.^{xiii} When the metaphorical use of the term “taste” first rose to prominence in the 18th Century—the era George Dickie referred to as “the century of taste”^{xiv}—it had a number of connotations all of which suggested some sort of *evaluation* involved in judgments of taste. The concept of taste was taken variously to have reference to objective value (as in “good taste”) and to have reference to subjective value (as in the phrase “a matter of taste”). This subjectivity could be taken individually or culturally as when writers of the period would refer, for example, to “European” or “modern tastes” in contrast to “Greek” or “ancient tastes”. (We will see below how the philosophers of taste might consistently affirm both the objectivity and the subjectivity of taste.) Moreover, to say that someone has, to use Hume’s term, a “delicate taste” is to ascribe a *virtue* to that person. A person with delicacy of taste has the valuable ability, analogous to a wine taster, to discern the presence of qualities unnoticed by other observers. The analogy with physical taste suggests evaluation in that physical taste is a universal faculty of human nature. If

taste is part of the natural human physiological or psychological makeup, then all properly functioning human beings have the faculty taste. In other words, since aesthetic taste is analogous to a physical sense, then blindness to aesthetic properties should be seen as no less a disability than literal, physical blindness. At the same time taste was standardly thought to be an educable faculty as seen in the locution “an acquired taste”.

It may be difficult at first to understand how taste can be both objectively normative and subjectively relative. A full explication of this point is beyond the scope of this paper. Here let me suggest that the answer will have to do with intersubjectivity. To call something an intersubjective reality is to distinguish it both from objective and subjective reality. Something is *objective* if it is mind-independent, i.e., if it exists independently of all mental representation. Something is *subjective* if it is individually mind-dependent, i.e., if it exists only in one person's experience and is hence relative to that person's individual point of view. Something is *intersubjective* if it is collectively mind-dependent, i.e., if it exists in a group of people's experience such that it is relative to what Hume will call a “common” or “general” point of view. Take, for example, the claim that a particular object is red. If this statement is interpreted as a claim to objective reality, then it means (on a Lockean analysis, updated according to current understandings of physics) that the object has an atomic structure that reflects light of a certain wavelength. An object's color conceived thusly is something a blind person would be able to know if given certain facts about the object's physical structure. But if the statement is interpreted as a claim to subjective reality, then it means that the speaker is having on this particular occasion a certain qualitative experience—regardless of whether anyone else (or even the same speaker at a different time)

would have that experience. This is an entirely private experience and is relative to the idiosyncrasies of the perceiver's point of view. For example, the perceiver might be colorblind or be wearing rose-colored glasses. Finally if the statement is interpreted as a claim to intersubjective reality, then it means that the object would generate a certain qualitative experience in a perceiver under socio-linguistically standard circumstances. In other words, anyone who uses the word "red" the way we do, has properly functioning perceptual faculties that operate the way ours do, is perceiving the object under lighting conditions we consider normal, etc. will judge this object to be red.

On this scheme 18th Century rationalist John Balguy is giving an objective account of beauty when he says that "all Beauty, whether Moral or natural, is to be reckoned and reputed as a Species of Absolute Truth; as resulting from, or consisting in, the necessary Relations and unchangeable Congruities of ideas".^{xv} Most other 18th Century philosophers, however, thought of aesthetic judgments as qualitative experiences of pleasure. On our classification, then, taste would be for these philosophers either subjective or intersubjective. Hobbes is claiming that moral judgments are subjective when he writes that "whatsoever is the object of any mans Appetite or Desire; that is it, which he for his part calleth *Good*" so that the "words Good, Evil, and Contemptible, are ever used with relation to the person that useth them: There being nothing simply and absolutely so; nor any common Rule of Good and Evil, to be taken from the nature of the objects themselves" (*Leviathan* 1.6, p. 39).^{xvi} Moral properties are not in the objects themselves but are in the individual's mind relative to his or her desires.^{xvii} Hutcheson and Hume are claiming that moral facts are intersubjective when each of them compares moral facts (in somewhat different ways)

to secondary qualities like color.^{xviii} For these philosophers moral facts are not in an individual's mind but are relative to a social practice of attributing moral qualities to things. If judgments of taste are intersubjective in this way, then they could be essentially subjective experiences while still having a normative standard which has a kind of objectivity in that it is not relative to any individual person's thoughts, feelings, or desires. Moreover, cultural relativity could be explained with reference to various cultures' different ways of specifying the intersubjective standard conditions of moral perception. In other words, we could affirm that moral judgment is a "matter of taste" without denying that there is such a thing as "good taste"—moral judgment would not be *merely* a matter of taste. Both moral sense theory and moral taste theory can appeal to the intersubjectivity of moral judgment, but they generally do so in significantly different ways.

The last, and most important, connotation of the term "taste" is that taste is supposed to be a motivational faculty. As mentioned above, the analogy with taste implies a *conative* element. This is the key distinction between moral sense theories and moral taste theories. While the senses are often understood (especially by early modern British empiricists) as purely cognitive, the analogy with taste implies both cognitive and conative elements. Not only does good taste allow us to discern *information* about aesthetic properties, good taste is also a *desire* to experience those properties. The element of motivation comes out in the locution, used by both Shaftesbury and Hume, "to have a taste for X". This locution is equivalent to a more common one: "to have a relish for X". As the synonym "relish" suggests, to have a taste for something is to desire it, i.e., to be motivated to pursue it.

In 20th Century terms, moral sense theory is compatible with *motivational externalism* while moral taste theory is committed to *motivational internalism*. Internalism is the view that motivation is “internal” to moral judgment, a claim that needs explication. As a first approximation, let us say that internalism is a family of views each of which holds that there is (some sort of) necessary connection between moral properties (or facts) and an agent’s motivation. Externalism, then, is the family of views according to which any connection between morality and motivation is contingent.^{xix} As they stand, these definitions are rather vague. To make them more precise, we need some help from distinctions drawn by Stephen Darwall. The above definition of internalism is broad enough to include the view that judging an action to be morally obligatory *causes* a motive to do it. On this view, “although motive is in no way intrinsic to ethical facts themselves, it is a necessary consequence of *perceiving* or *knowing* them”.^{xx} Knowing an ethical fact and being motivated to act on that knowledge always go together on this view, but this correlation is logically contingent. Knowledge and motivation remain distinct states of affairs. Most versions of the moral sense theory (including Hutcheson’s) fall into this category. But Darwall reserves the term internalism for views according to which having a (certain kind of) motive to do something is what its rightness *consists in*. On this view “the existence of motive, perhaps of a certain kind or under certain circumstances, is (at least part of) what it is for a normative proposition to be true”.^{xxi} The process of practical deliberation results in an unqualified motive, and the existence of that motive constitutes normative moral obligation. Only on the latter view is motivation truly *internal* to moral judgment, rather than simply accompanying moral judgment. And this is how moral taste theory conceives of moral judgment. According to moral

taste theory, engaging in moral judgment involves a process of aesthetic discrimination which, for the person of good moral taste, results in a motive to pursue or avoid a state of affairs, and that motivation itself is what constitutes the value of the state of affairs, because the morally beautiful action or character trait just is the action or trait which would be attractive to the person of good moral taste. Thus motivation is internal (in Darwall's sense) to judgments of taste.

To summarize the complex set of evaluational connotations which the term "taste" would suggest to contemporaries of Shaftesbury and Hume, aesthetic taste was thought to be: (1) an *aesthetic* faculty directed at beauty, whether of body or soul; (2) a *natural*^{xxii} faculty in analogy to physical taste; (3) a *motivating* faculty as in "having a taste (or relish) for X"; (4) an *educable* faculty as in "an acquired taste"; (5) a *descriptively evaluable* faculty as in "delicacy of taste" (6) a *normatively evaluable* faculty as in "good taste"; (7) a *subjective* faculty as in "a matter of taste"; (8) a *culturally relative* faculty as in "European tastes". The general features of moral taste theory which allow these seemingly contradictory connotations to be made consistent are moral taste theory's commitment to *motivational internalism* and the *intersubjective theory of rationality*.

NOTES

ⁱ I say that EPM is Hume's "final work of moral philosophy", because, after writing EPM, Hume turned his attention, with the exception of revising *Treatise* Book 2 as *A Dissertation on the Passions*, to history and political theory. While Hume continued revising EPM the rest of his life, he never wrote a new work on ethics.

ⁱⁱ For a recent example of this view, see James Baille's *Hume on Morality* (Routledge, 2000): "Philosophical taxonomists usually classify Hume as a *moral sense theorist*. This tradition originates with Lord Shaftesbury (Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury), although its influence on Hume came primarily from the writings of Francis Hutcheson" (p. 15-16).

ⁱⁱⁱ See Raphael's *The Moral Sense* (Oxford University Press, 1947) and his anthology *British Moralists* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969).

^{iv} See James Bonar's *Moral Sense* (Macmillan, 1930), p. 9

^v Selby-Bigge, L.A. *British Moralists* (Oxford University Press, 1897), Vol I, p. xlii

^{vi} The primary distinction Smith is making is whether moral judgments are made by a "peculiar faculty" or simply by our ordinary feelings and sentiments (TMS VII.iii.3.2-3, p. 321; cf. III.iv.5, p. 158).

^{vii} Hume seems to use the term "moral sense" interchangeably with terms such as, for example, "conscience, or a sense of morals" (T 3.1.1.10), "sense of morality" (T 3.1.1.20), "sense of virtue" (T 3.1.2.3), "sentiment of morality" (T 3.1.2.8), "sentiment of right and wrong" (T 3.2.2.23), "moral sentiments" (T 3.2.6.3), "sentiment of approbation" (T 3.2.6.4), "sentiments of virtue" (T 3.3.1.21), "taste in morals" (T 3.2.8.8n80), "moral taste" (T 3.3.1.15), etc.

^{viii} See Darwall's *The British Moralists and the Internal 'Ought'* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 20-1 and Gill's "Shaftesbury's Two Accounts of the Reason to Be Virtuous" in *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 38:4 (October, 2000), p. 529n1.

^{ix} Perhaps no single definition could capture the way all historians use the term "moral sense theory", but I claim that my analysis here identifies three features common to the most widely used definitions of moral sense theory. I draw especially from Chapter 1 of D.D. Raphael's *The Moral Sense* and Selby-Bigge's Introduction to his anthology *British Moralists*.

^x Actually, the only reason the moral sense would have to be conceived as distinct from reason is if the moral sense theorist was committed to empiricism and wanted to avoid positing innate ideas of good and evil. Thus moral sense theory is closely related to rational intuitionism. Frankena suggests that intuitionism is the broader category that can be subdivided into rational intuitionism and moral sense theory, conceived as empirical intuitionism. See William Frankena, "Hutcheson's Moral Sense Theory" *Journal of the History of Ideas* 16:3 (June 1955), p. 357. Raphael makes a similar suggestion *The Moral Sense*, p. 2-3. But one could just as easily say that moral sense theory is the broader category that should be subdivided into empirical moral sense theory and

rationalist moral sense theory (i.e., intuitionism). Mackie sees the distinction between intuitionism and moral sense theory in a slightly different way. He focuses on the question of whether our “faculty for drawing moral distinctions” detects “qualities” that are “objective” or “subjective”. See J.L. Mackie, *Hume’s Moral Theory* (Routledge, 1980), p. 33. At one point he suggests that moral sense theory is the “subjective interpretation” of the analogy between moral judgment and perception, while intuitionism is the “objective” interpretation (p. 33). At another point he suggests that “moral sense” theory is the name of the genus whose “objectivist” species is “intuitionism” and whose subjectivist species is “sentimentalism” (p. 72).

^{xi} See Hutcheson *Inquiry* II.iv. Compare *Inquiry* I.vi in which Hutcheson claims that diversity in aesthetic judgment is entirely due to psychological associations that prevent us from having pure experiences of the objects in question.

^{xii} For a nice discussion of the metaphorical use of the term “taste” in philosophical aesthetics, see Carolyn Korsmeyer, *Making Sense of Taste: Food and Philosophy* (Cornell University Press, 1999), p. 38-45.

^{xiii} The *Oxford English Dictionary* gives this as the relevant definition of “taste”: “Mental perception of quality; judgment, discriminative faculty”. Compare this sub-definition which limits taste to the aesthetic realm: “The sense of what is appropriate, harmonious, or beautiful; *esp.* discernment and appreciation of the beautiful in nature or art; *spec.* the faculty of perceiving and enjoying what is excellent in art, literature, and the like”. See *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd Ed. by J.A. Simpson and E.S.C. Weiner (Oxford, 1989).

^{xiv} Dickie, George. *The Century of Taste: The Philosophical Odyssey of Taste in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 3

^{xv} Balguy, John. “Foundation of Moral Goodness” in *British Moralists*, ed. L.A. Selby-Bigge, Vol II, (Oxford University Press, 1897) p. 71n1.

^{xvi} References to Hobbes are to Richard Tuck’s Revised Student Edition of *Leviathan* (Cambridge, 1996), cited by part and chapter numbers.

^{xvii} Note that ultimately Hobbes does think there can be a common rule of good if the sovereign brings it about through legal sanctions. Nevertheless this common rule is a human construction that is not “taken from the nature of the objects themselves”.

^{xviii} See, for example, Hutcheson’s *Inquiry* I.i.17 and Hume’s *Treatise* 3.1.1.26.

^{xix} The terms internalism and externalism originally derive from W.D. Falk “Ought’ and Motivation” in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* (1947-8): 111-38, and William Frankena “Obligation and Motivation in Recent Moral Philosophy” in A.I. Melden *Essays on*

Moral Philosophy (University of Washington, 1958). Other important discussions include Thomas Nagel *The Possibility of Altruism* (Princeton, 1978), and Bernard Williams “Internal and External Reasons” in *Moral Luck* (Cambridge, 1981). The version of the distinction I use follows Stephen Darwall, “Internalism and Agency” *Philosophical Perspectives* 6 (1992), 155-74, which refines earlier distinctions made in Darwall’s *Impartial Reason* (Cornell, 1983), pp. 51-61. Darwall’s key advance is to distinguish between views which posit a moral *judgment*/motivation connection and those views which posit a moral *fact*/motivation connection.

^{xx} *The British Moralists and the Internal Ought*, p. 10

^{xxi} *Ibid.*, p. 11

^{xxii} By “natural” in this context, I mean it only in the 18th Century sense as that which is grounded in human nature, leaving open the 20th Century question of whether moral properties are non-natural in the sense of G.E. Moore.